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EXAMINER

LE, LANA N

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2685

9

DATE MAILED: 04/07/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/933,858

Applicant(s)

BUESSELER ET AL.

Examiner

Lana Le

Art Unit

2685

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 January 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-41 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 31-41 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 2, 4, 6, 12, 13 and 26-29 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 5, 7-11, 14-25, and 30 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Response to Arguments***

1. Applicant's arguments with respect to claim 1 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.
2. Applicant's arguments filed 1-26-04 regarding the double patenting have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Regarding claim 1, applicant's remarks regarding lack of utility in the cited reference, Buesseler et al (US D470,135), is not persuasive in that the shown figures 1-7 of Buesseler et al (US D470,135) represent the claimed subject matter of applicant's claim 1 which merely depicts the shape of the cover and what its circumference is composed of, i.e. a front, side, and back surface. The intended use of the cover is to cover a mobile phone as cited in claim 1 of the cited reference. The detailed reason for the obviousness double patenting stands rejected as set forth in the previous office action filed 12/22/03.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the

Art Unit: 2685

applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

3. Claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 12-13, 26-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Engstrom et al (US 2003/0104,791).

The applied reference has a common assignee with the instant application. Based upon the earlier effective U.S. filing date of the reference, it constitutes prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). This rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) might be overcome either by a showing under 37 CFR 1.132 that any invention disclosed but not claimed in the reference was derived from the inventor of this application and is thus not the invention "by another," or by an appropriate showing under 37 CFR 1.131.

Regarding claim 1, Engstrom et al discloses an interchangeable cover 100 (figs.1-4) for a mobile communications device comprising:

a front face and back face commonly connected to a side portion and having a substantially U-shaped profile adapted to wrap around a substantial portion of a front, back and side of the mobile communications device upon assembly over the mobile communications device (page 3, paragraphs 51), the cover comprises a resilient semi-rigid shell (page 2, para. 23 of Engstrom; page 3, para. 54 of Engstrom).

Regarding claim 2, Engstrom discloses the interchangeable cover of claim 1 for a mobile communications device comprising: wherein the resilient semi-rigid shell is adapted to be secured to the mobile communications device without any fasteners by snapping on (para. 51).

Regarding claim 4, Engstrom et al further discloses wherein the mobile

communication device includes a plurality of openings (see 12 holes of fig. 1) keypad buttons (see keypad buttons of fig. 4) above area pointed by reference numeral 100 (see the difference between fig. 1 without mobile phone inserted and fig. 4 with mobile phone inserted).

Regarding claim 6, Engstrom et al discloses the interchangeable cover of claim 1, wherein the mobile communications device includes a set of keypad buttons (keypad of mobile phone; fig. 4) and one or more input buttons (middle buttons at center of cover, input buttons at area pointed by numeral 300; fig. 4) apart from the set of keypad buttons, and wherein the front face of the interchangeable cover includes one or more openings defined therein through which said one or more input buttons pass upon assembly of the interchangeable cover over the mobile communications device to enable a user to activate said one or more input buttons.

Regarding claim 12, Engstrom et al discloses the interchangeable cover of claim 1, further including a cutout region (center cutout of fig. 1) defined in the front face extending inwardly from a mid-portion thereof to enable actuation of one or more input buttons disposed on a front side (fig. 4 with mobile phone inserted) of the mobile communications device upon assembly of the interchangeable cover over the mobile communications device.

Regarding claim 13, Engstrom et al discloses the interchangeable cover of claim 12, wherein the cutout region comprises a radiused-V-shape configuration extending across a substantial portion of the front face (see fig. 1, V shaped cut out center portion).

Regarding claim 26, Engstrom discloses the interchangeable cover of claim 1 for a mobile communications device comprising: that the mobile device comprises a cellular phone 300 (fig. 4; para. 51, line 3-5).

Regarding claim 27, Engstrom et al discloses the interchangeable cover of claim 1 wherein Engstrom et al further discloses the mobile communications device comprises a pocket PC (para. 58).

Regarding claim 29, Engstrom et al discloses the interchangeable cover of claim 1 wherein Engstrom et al further discloses the mobile communications device comprises a pocket PC (para. 58).

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claim 28 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Engstrom et al (US 2003/0104,791).

Regarding claim 28, Engstrom et al discloses the interchangeable cover of claim 1 wherein Engstrom et al didn't specifically disclose the mobile communications device comprises a two-way pager. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to replace the mobile phone of Engstrom et al et al with a two-way pager in order to fit any other alternative type of communication

Art Unit: 2685

device that has the shape of a mobile phone (Engstrom; para. 58).

### ***Double Patenting***

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

5. Claims 1-2, 26-29 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 1 of U.S. Patent No. D470,135S. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the interchangeable cover to be placed over a mobile phone that is shown and described in figs. 1-7 of claim 1 of prior art reference # US D470,135 S has the same U-shaped feature used to cover a mobile phone's front, side, and back that is described in the present application claim 1, except for a resilient semi-rigid shell which is not described in the claim 1 of US D470,135 S but appears to be a hard shell according to the figure 1 shown and would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art in which the material used to cover the phone can be made of any kind of well-known material and its elasticity, i.e. rubber, plastic, metal, etc. which

would not be considered an essential or necessary part of the claimed invention to be practiced with this specific detail of well-known material used for it to be considered novel to one of ordinary skill in the art and therefore can be omitted without affecting the claimed invention.

The two-way obviousness double patenting rejection in which claim 1 of the prior art D470,135S claim an ornamental aspect or design can be any type of broad and various kinds of ornamental design in which the ornament can be a decorative shape as shown in fig. 1 or to ornament with molding of the contour of the interchangeable cover to fit the mobile phone via a U-shaped profile to cover a front, side, and back as shown and described in figs. 1-7 of the prior art reference. Claim 1 of the prior art reference specifically said the cover "as shown and described" in which the figures shown can represent the description of the similar features claimed in words to describe the U-shaped profile in claim 1 of the present application. The "interchangeable cover for a mobile phone" claimed in claim 1 of the prior art reference D470,135 S would be able to function as a cover or in other words a cover is defined as an outer layer/wrapper for protection of an object/device, utilized to overlay or appear here and there on the surface of the object/device. Therefore, when it is assembled over the mobile device as claimed in claim 1 of the present application, the cover claimed in claim 1 of the prior art reference would act or be utilized as an outer layer/wrapper when it is placed/overlayed over the mobile device as in the definition of a cover. In conclusion, the ornamental and utility aspect of claim 1 of the prior art reference reads onto claim 1 of the present application and would not be considered patentably distinct from each other.



Regarding claim 1, Buesseler et al discloses an interchangeable cover (fig. 1) for a mobile communications device comprising:

a front face and back face commonly connected to a side portion and having a substantially U-shaped profile adapted to wrap around a substantial portion of a front, back and side of the mobile communications device upon assembly over the mobile communications device (claim 1 as shown and described in figures 1-7). Buesseler et al didn't disclose: the cover comprises a resilient semi-rigid shell. However, the examiner takes official notice that the material used to make the cover of the mobile phone of Buesseler can be made of any kind of well-known material, i.e. rubber, plastic, metal, semi-rigid shell, or any other alternative kind. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to allow the cover shown in figs. 1-7 of Buesseler et al to have a resilient semi-rigid shell as one of many alternative materials in order to preferably choose a hard cover to better protect the phone from damage and deformation.

Regarding claim 2, Buesseler discloses the interchangeable cover of claim 1 for a mobile communications device comprising: wherein the resilient semi-rigid shell is adapted to be secured to the mobile communications device without any fasteners (see fig. 1; claim 1 "interchangeable cover"). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to derive from the interchangeable cover of claim 1 that the cover fits over the phone perfectly and securely without the need for any screw or tightener.

Regarding claim 26, Buesseler discloses the interchangeable cover of claim 1 for

a mobile communications device comprising: that the mobile device comprises a cellular phone (see fig 1, "mobile phone of claim 1").

Regarding claim 27, Buessler discloses the interchangeable cover of claim 1 wherein Buessler didn't specifically disclose the mobile communications device comprises a pocket PC. However, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to replace the mobile phone of Buessler et al with a pocket PC in order to fit any other alternative type of communication device that has the shape of a mobile phone with the interchangeable cover of claim 1 of Buessler.

Regarding claim 28, Buessler discloses the interchangeable cover of claim 1 wherein Buessler didn't specifically disclose the mobile communications device comprises a two-way pager. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to replace the mobile phone of Buessler et al with a two-way pager in order to fit any other alternative type of communication device that has the shape of a mobile phone with the interchangeable cover of claim 1 of Buessler.

Regarding claim 29, Buessler discloses the interchangeable cover of claim 1 wherein Buessler didn't specifically disclose the mobile communications device comprises a pocket PC. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to replace the mobile phone of Buessler et al with a pocket PC in order to fit any other alternative type of communication device that has the shape of a mobile phone with the interchangeable cover of claim 1 of Buessler.

Art Unit: 2685

***Allowable Subject Matter***

1. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:
2. Claims 5, 7-11, 14-25, and 30 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.
3. Claims 31-41 are allowable over the cited prior art.

Regarding independent claims 31 and 40, the cited prior art fails to disclose or suggest the claimed invention for the remarks and amendments made in applicant's remarks, paper #5.

***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lana Le whose telephone number is (703) 308-5836. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F.

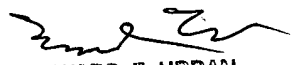
Art Unit: 2685

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Edward Urban can be reached on (703) 305-4385. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Lana Le

March 13, 2004

  
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